

**Evaluation Report of a Lynda.com Course
in the Field of Art and Design**

Submitted to:

The Ambrose School

David Goodwin

Submitted by:

Reynholm Industries, LLC

Joshua Smith

Summary

In October 2012, the Ambrose School selected Reynholm Industries, LLC to conduct an evaluation of 15 recently purchased subscriptions to the Lynda.com website to determine if this specific educational technology tool was an effective supplement to the primary lessons in their art and design curriculum. In short, the following document is a report on the evaluation of the Lynda.com website. Specifically, the primary purpose of this report is to present the evaluation's findings on Lynda.com to assist in the decision-making process regarding the effectiveness and continued use of the product. In other words, this report was constructed to offer assistance in providing information that is useful to the stakeholders and school administrators responsible for making decisions about the purchase and use of educational technology in the Ambrose School. In the end, Reynholm Industries, LLC provided expertise and consultation on whether or not the website Lynda.com offered constructive educational lessons to the students of the Ambrose School.

In examining the program, the product Lynda.com's main goal is to assist individuals in learning software, creative, and business skills to achieve their personal and professional goals. With a Lynda.com subscription, learners receive unlimited access to a vast library of high-quality, current, and engaging video tutorials taught by recognized industry experts. In fact, courses are presented in small chunks, so it's easy to find quick answers to specific questions. In essence, Lynda.com provides a customizable learning environment for their members by teaching the most relevant course topics, carefully recruiting and retaining authors who are the best at what they do, and are staying on top of trends and updates in the world of technology. Ultimately, Lynda.com makes it easy for students to find what they want to learn, and to explore countless other topics along the way.

In short, the overall purpose of this evaluation report was to encapsulate the evaluation of one of Lynda.com's single, video tutorial courses, and determine if it improved the knowledge and attitude of students in the area of design. Specifically, the evaluation was conducted to determine if the educational tool Lynda.com was a beneficial addition to the art & design program at the Ambrose School. In short, through the use of pre-tests and pre-surveys, on-task observations of the use of Lynda.com, and post-tests and post-surveys; this evaluation report shows how a specific, educational technology product worked under ideal conditions and how effective the product was as a supplemental educational tool.

In the end, the results of this particular evaluation showed that the online video tutorial service of Lynda.com not only helped students in obtaining new knowledge and skills about the world of design, but it also assisted in motivating and changing the attitude of learning information in a new, technology literate way. In short, the Lynda.com website made sometimes abstract and complex design lessons easy. In fact, by a 30% increase of the average test score to a 100% passing rate at the end of the evaluation, the Lynda.com online video tutorial service showed that it is a highly-capable tool in helping increase students' performance, knowledge and skill sets in the field of design. Additionally, the results also demonstrated that the students already had a moderate to high interest in using online video tutorials and learning new knowledge and skills, and, after the use of Lynda.com, their interest grew even more. In the end, the evaluation found that Lynda.com is an effective solution at measuring the performance and attitude of the learners utilizing the product.

Description of the Program Evaluated

The evaluation of Lynda.com's "Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11" course is generally reserved for individual or small group learning in an academic or professional setting. For this particular examination, the evaluation of the product was set in one of the Ambrose School's computer labs where fifteen 9th-12th grade students not only had access to Lynda.com on their own, individual computers, but also had a provision of other resources like the Adobe Photoshop Elements software, Lynda.com training examples, and live, hands-on support. In short, this specific evaluation focused on how effective, efficient, and impactful a 2 hour and 46 minute, beginner-level video tutorial course administered over three days would be for the target audience of one class of beginning designers at the current, high-school level.

For the context of the program, the approach to the evaluation consisted of more than the packaged product or service. Essentially, the evaluation also considered how the product was ultimately being used. In other words, the purpose of this evaluation was to monitor the implementation of the product with the overall goal of improving the knowledge and performance of students in the area of design. In the end, the evaluation monitored the effectiveness of how new knowledge and skills were delivered to each student. Additionally, this evaluation was used to show the Ambrose School's Board of Directors that a proper examination of Lynda.com was made in determining if it should be accepted or rejected as an effective, educational tool.

Program Objectives

The overall goal of this evaluation was to determine if one of Lynda.com's single, video tutorial courses improved the knowledge and attitude of students in the area of design. Essentially, this evaluation plan was made to show how a specific, educational technology product works when it is used as intended. In other words, the evaluation tried to determine how the product worked under ideal conditions and how effective the product was as a supplemental educational tool. Thus, in keeping the primary goal in mind, the following stated objectives were derived:

- To determine if Lynda.com increases student performance in the area of design
- To determine if Lynda.com changes attitudes towards online tutorials
- To determine if Lynda.com lesson actively engages students
- To determine how well students understand and use a Lynda.com lesson
- To determine the contribution or distraction of a Lynda.com lesson on the primary, educational lesson
- To determine the limitations of a Lynda.com lesson

Program Components

Essentially, the fifteen high schools students included in this evaluation attended their normally scheduled art class in one of the Ambrose School's small computer labs. Using an individually assigned computer and a single set of headphones, each student logged onto their specific computer and accessed the "Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11" video tutorial course on the Lynda.com website with their computer's specific subscription to the Lynda.com tutorial

service. Next, after the students accessed the Lynda.com website, they immediately opened the Adobe Photoshop Elements software preinstalled on the computer and downloaded the “Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11” course’s examples from the Lynda.com website to practice alongside the audio-guided, video tutorials.

In short, the Lynda.com “Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11” course offered 3-4 minute video tutorial lessons. In these videos, each student found information on design principles as well as information on the website’s interface. Essentially, each one of these videos employ expert instructors and teachers that are true masters in their fields and who offer step-by-step instruction and useful advice on how to use Adobe Photoshop Elements. In the end, the purpose of the Lynda.com website is to impart knowledge regarding correct workflow and to teach various digital tools as well as techniques in the best manner possible.

Evaluation Method

Participants

This particular evaluation did not include any sampling. Essentially, the evaluation population for this examination was extremely small. In fact, because the Ambrose School is a small private school, the art and design class where the evaluation was conducted only had fifteen students from grades 9 - 12 in one class. In short, the evaluation was only used in one class where the students and the Lynda.com implementation could be closely monitored. In other words, the Ambrose School would not have ultimately benefited from a breakdown or sample of the overall evaluation population.

Nevertheless, by keeping the evaluation population small, Reynholm Industries, LLC was able to utilize a smaller team of personnel to provide students with support for any questions they had as well as to collect observational data during the evaluation process. The following individuals were key personnel during this evaluation:

- **Joshua Smith**, an 8-year teacher in the field of art and design, guided and directed the overall planning and implementation of the Lynda.com evaluation. In short, Mr. Smith worked under the direction of the Ambrose School’s Board of Directors to advise on and develop the appropriate evaluation designs and methods needed to assess Lynda.com’s effectiveness in the classroom. Mr. Smith holds a B.A. from Ashford University and a master’s degree in Educational Technology from Boise State University.
- **Dr. Carolyn Uhl**, a SME in evaluations and evaluation methods and Chief Evaluation Specialist and Instructional Designer at Reynholm Industries, LLC formulated and designed the assessment and survey methods used in the evaluation. Additionally, she supervised the data collection as well as provided summary interpretations of the data. Additionally, Dr. Uhl works with Reynholm Industries, LLC to develop methodologies necessary to meet deliverables required in evaluation tasks. Dr. Uhl has a MBA from the University of Idaho as well as a Ph.D. degree in Education from the University of California-Irvine.

Procedures

Before the actual evaluation began, Reynholm Industries, LLC reviewed the Lynda.com service, installed the Adobe Photoshop Elements website and accessed the Lynda.com subscriptions on the individual computers in the Ambrose School's computer lab, and completed the "Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11" course to better understand the tutorial service for support purposes. In all, the personnel for this specific evaluation spent two weeks with the product before beginning the intended evaluation. Next, a week before the evaluation started, the students were given a knowledge test and an opinion survey on design knowledge and the Adobe Photoshop Elements software respectively. After the results of the pre-test and pre-surveys were recorded, the Reynholm Industries, LLC team began the three-day evaluation period of Lynda.com with its intended target audience.

During the evaluation period, the students logged onto their individual Lynda.com accounts and used the provided password, headphones, keyboards, and mice to complete the excises for the course on Adobe Photoshop Elements. In short, the students started with lesson one, "Importing Your Photos" of the "Up and Running with Photoshop Elements 11" tutorial and, ultimately, finished with lesson eight, "Sharing Your Photos," in the middle of the third day of class. Overall, the program conformed to its normal use and operated without any problem during the evaluation period. In fact, there were no reports of issues with the tutorial service, and the only support recorded was given to one student who had a malfunctioning set of headphones that were ultimately replace with another pair. Lastly, after the students ended their tutorial in the middle of the third day, the evaluation personnel redistributed the same test and survey for the students to take a second time for a comparative analysis.

Data Sources

During the evaluation, there were multiple sources in which data was collected. First, participant performance, the primary source, was measured through the pre-test and post-test provided to the students before and after the evaluation respectively. In short, the simple 10 question test (See Appendix A below) examined the student's knowledge of basic design concepts as well as their understanding of the Adobe Photoshop Elements software. Next, participant attitudes were collected by nearly the same method. Essentially, each student was given the same pre-survey and post-survey (See Appendix B below) before and after the evaluation respectively. In essence, the short, five question survey was used to measure the student's attitude towards using the Lynda.com tutorial service and learning new design knowledge and skills. Lastly, the Reynholm Industries, LLC team used the on-task observation technique (See Appendix C below) to measure individual student's attention during each task. In other words, the on-task observational technique gave the evaluation team information about the on-task behavior of specific students. Additionally, it also showed the overall student engagement for the Lynda.com activity.

Results

First, in examining the results of the primary resource, the "Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics Test," the evaluation personnel noted a significant improvement in test scores between the pre-test and post-test. Essentially, among the 15 students involved in the evaluation, the average score of the "Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics" pre-test was 50% with only 5 of the total 15 selected students passing. In contrast, at the end of the evaluation, the

average score of the “Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics” post-test was 80% with 15 out of the 15 selected students passing. Overall, from the pre-test to the post-test, the evaluated students’ scores increase by 30% (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Results of the Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics Test

	Avg. Score	No. of students who passed out of 15
Pre-Test	50%	5
Post-Test	80%	15

Next, in examining the results of the secondary source of the evaluation, the Reynholm Industries, LLC team reviewed the opinions of the evaluated students through a pre-survey and post-survey. For example, during the pre-survey, the students were asked on a scale from 1 to 5, with a 1 representing a dislike for online tutorials and a 5 representing a really high opinion, if they typically enjoyed online tutorials. In short, the averages score for the 15 evaluated students during the pre-survey was a 3.33 with a majority of the students selecting a 3 or feeling indifferent towards online tutorials. In contrast, after using the Lynda.com video tutorial website, the average score for the 15 evaluated students in the post-survey was a 4.73 with a majority of the students selecting a 5 to rate their enjoyment of online tutorials. Additionally, students were also asked in the pre-survey and post-survey if they would like to learn more about Adobe Photoshop Elements. Before and after the evaluation 14 out of 15, or 93.3% of the evaluated students said, “Yes.” (See Figure 2 below for the full results of the pre and post survey).

Figure 2: Results of the Survey of Attitudes Toward Tutorial Websites and New Knowledge

	Question 1: Avg. Score	Question 2: Avg. Score	Question 3: % of respondents who answered Yes	Question 4: % of respondents who answered Yes	Question 5: % of respondents who answered Yes
Pre-Survey	3.33	4.40	93.3%	53.3%	86.7%
Post-Survey	4.73	4.60	93.3%	73.3%	100.0%

Lastly, in examining the final data source, the evaluation personnel was able to examine if the students were using the product the way it was intended by examining whether or not the students’ stayed on task and remained actively engaged. Overall, the on-task observational technique showed that 11 students stayed on task in writing/typing 100% of the time while 2 students stayed on task in writing/typing 92% of the time. Additionally, there were 2 other

students that stayed on task in writing/typing 84% of the time. In all case, where the 4 students were off task, they were labeled as “Daydreaming.”

Discussion

The overall goal of this evaluation was to determine if one of Lynda.com’s single, video tutorial courses improved the knowledge and attitude of students in the area of design. For this particular evaluation, the Reynholm Industries, LLC team conducted an efficacy study. In short, they showed how a specific, educational technology product worked when it was used as it was intended. In other words, they demonstrated how the product worked under ideal conditions and how effective the product was in a typical classroom setting. More specifically, they studied the specifications, limitations, and benefits of the chosen educational technology product and monitored its implementation to ensure that the delivery of the training, infrastructure, and support of the product was ultimately controlled.

The results of this particular evaluation showed that the online video tutorial service of Lynda.com not only helped students in obtaining new knowledge and skills about the world of design, but it also assisted in motivating and changing the attitude of learning information in a new, technology literate way. In short, the Lynda.com website made sometimes abstract and complex design lessons easy. In fact, all of the modules or lessons within the selected Lynda.com course were short, self-paced and on-demand. In the end, Lynda.com is a cost-effective solution that effectively measures the performance and attitude of the learners utilizing the product.

Specifically, the primary data source of the “Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics Test” showed that the Lynda.com online video tutorial service help improve the selected students’ knowledge in the field of design. By a 30% increase of the average test score to a 100% passing rate at the end of the evaluation, the Lynda.com online video tutorial service showed that it is a highly-capable tool in helping increase students’ performance, knowledge and skill sets in the field of design. Additionally, the “Survey of Attitudes Toward Tutorial Websites and New Knowledge” demonstrated that the students already had a moderate to high interest in using online video tutorials and learning new knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, after using the Lynda.com online video tutorials, their interest and motivation in learning new skills through audio and video tutorials grew even more. Lastly, the on-task observation techniques showed the Reynholm Industries, LLC team that the students were eager, focused, and excited to learn 84% to 100% percent of the time. Overall, these three data source revealed strong indicators of the value of the Lynda.com website.

Specifically, the Lynda.com interface makes exceptional use of audio and visual element of a computer. In other words, the website utilized the screen in a way that allowed the students to view the video tutorial while simultaneously working through the lesson with the corresponding exercise file. Additionally, the interface allowed students to individually adjust the volume of the video tutorials so that each student could listen to video lessons at their own comfort level. Ultimately, the interface for the individual lessons in each Lynda.com course allows students to adjust their interaction so that they can work with a tool that best suits their individual learning style.

Overall, the results of this specific evaluation ultimately supported the primary purpose of the evaluation by demonstrating that new knowledge was gained and an even more positive attitude towards the field of design was measured and observed. In fact, with the success of the Lynda.com online, video tutorial website; the Ambrose School can feel confident in Lynda.com's role in supporting the classroom's primary educational lesson as an effective, efficient, and impactful educational tool. Furthermore, the Lynda.com website also appears to motivate students and get them excited about learning. Additionally, the survey observation results of the selected students showed that there is an appetite for this kind of instruction in the Ambrose School. Thus, the Ambrose School's Board of Directors can rest easy knowing that their students are learning relevant, real-world skills through the use of an effective educational technology tool.

Lastly, Reynholm Industries, LLC would not hesitate to recommend Lynda.com as an educational technology tool that would help enhance the Ambrose School's art and design program. In short, it is a low cost solution that is dynamic, entertaining, and customizable. It is the perfect solution for teaching abstract concepts and complex ideas to students with varying learning styles. In the end, Lynda.com met the goals and objectives of the Ambrose School.

Project Cost

The project costs for the aforementioned evaluation included charges for Reynholm Industries, LLC's personnel, travel, communications, and supplies. In short, the personnel charges of the Lynda.com evaluation stemmed from Mr. Smith's and Dr. Uhl's daily rate of \$500.00. In short, the Reynholm Industries' personnel team spent 5 days becoming familiar with the website, the components, and the learning environment, and 3 days conducting the evaluation. Additionally, Mr. Smith and Dr. Uhl's daily commute mileage and two initial visits for introduction and installation were expensed in travel. Next, with a minimum of one month, telephone charges were billed as well as communication postage. Lastly, supplies for the tests, surveys, and observation worksheets were expensed along with the cost of headphones for the video tutorials. Essentially, the above items in the evaluation were the only materials need because the Ambrose School had already purchased 15 Lynda.com premium licenses for their small computer lab. (See the invoice below)

INVOICE

Date: 12/11/2012
Invoice # 505

Reynholm Industries, LLC
1212 Mitchell St.
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 399-8000
Fax (208)-399-8001
info@rillc.com

To Attn: David Goodwin
The Ambrose School
6100 N. Locust Grove Rd
Meridian, ID 83646
(208) 323-3888
Customer ID R150512

Ship To Attn: David Goodwin
The Ambrose School
6100 N. Locust Grove Rd
Meridian, ID 83646
(208) 323-3888
Customer ID R150512

Location	Job	Evaluation Method	Job number	Start Date	Payment Terms	Due Date
The Ambrose School	EVAL	On-site	1505121022	10/22/2012	Full	Due on receipt

Service	Quantity	Description	Unit Price	Discount	Line Total
Personnel					
Joshua Smith	8 days	Professional Salaries	\$500/day		\$4,000.00
Dr. Carolyn Uhl	8 days	Professional Salaries	\$500/day		\$4,000.00
Travel					
Est. mileage	200 miles	Miscellaneous travel	\$.30 per mile		\$60.00
Site visits	2 visits	Miscellaneous travel	\$15 travel & \$25 per diem		\$80.00
Communications					
Telephone	1 month	Communications	\$100 per month		\$100.00
Postage	1 month	Communications	Flat Rate		\$25.00
Supplies					
Photocopying	50 copies	Materials	\$0.10 per copy		\$5.00
Headphones	18 sets	Materials	\$20.00 per pair		\$360.00
Total Discount					0.00
Subtotal					\$8,630.00
Sales Tax					\$517.80
Total					\$9147.80

Make all checks payable to Reynholm Industries, LLC

Thank you for your business!

Appendix A: Adobe Photoshop Elements and Design Basics Test

Instructions: Circle the correct answer to each question.

1. To quickly set your foreground to white and background to black in Adobe Photoshop elements, you would...

- a) Press D
- b) Press X
- c) Press X then D
- d) Press D then X

2. True or False: Asymmetrical is a type of visual balance in which two sides of a composition are different yet balanced.

3. Which of these items cannot be shown in the status bar in Adobe Photoshop Elements?

- a) Document dimensions.
- b) Document Sizes.
- c) The file location.
- d) Name of the currently selected tool.

4. True or False: Color spectrum is a plan for selecting or organizing colors for a composition.

5. If you want to pan your document without switching to the hand tool in the toolbox in Adobe Photoshop Elements, what key(s) would you press on the keyboard?

- a) Spacebar
- b) H
- c) Ctrl-H (Win) / Cmd-H (Mac)
- d) P

6. True or False: Secondary colors are directly opposite each other on the color wheel.

7. A small arrow in the Photoshop interface usually indicates what?

- a) A dialog box will be displayed.
- b) A menu will be displayed.

c) A palette will open.

d) The Organizer will open.

8. True or False: Colors are said to be contrasting when there is a large difference in lightness and darkness.

9. If the rectangle marquee tool is selected in Adobe Photoshop Elements and you need to use the elliptical marquee tool, how would you activate it?

a) Press Shift-M

b) Alt/Option click on the rectangle marquee toolbox button

c) Hold down on the rectangle marquee toolbox button and select the elliptical marquee from the flyout.

d) Any of the above

10. True or False: The elements of design are the visual tools artists use to create art. The art elements include line, color, value, shape, form, texture, and space.

Appendix B: Survey of Attitudes Toward Tutorial Websites and New Knowledge

Instructions: Please answer all questions. Circle your answer.

1. On a scale from 1 to 5, do you enjoy following online tutorials?

1 (Do Not Enjoy) 2 3 4 5 (Really Enjoy)

2. On a scale from 1 to 5, do you enjoy learning new knowledge?

1 (Do Not Enjoy) 2 3 4 5 (Really Enjoy)

3. Would you enjoy learning new design skills like Adobe Photoshop Elements?

Yes

No

4. Would you be interested in learning from experts in the field of art and design?

Yes

No

5. Would the use of video and audio help you understand design concepts better?

Yes

No

